(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Ministry of Environment & Forests on the recommendation of Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife in its 16th Meeting on 16.09.2009 has granted permission for undertaking survey and investigation involving an area of 2.5 hectare only against the area of 92,500 ha of Periyar Tiger Reserve subject to compliance of certain conditions as envisaged by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Kerala. However, no such proposal from Kerala Government seeking permission for undertaking forest survey for construction of a new dam in the Mullaperiyar reservoir area has been received under the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

National Environment Protection Authority

324. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has proposed to set up a statutory regulatory body the National Environment Protection Authority(NEPA) to grant clearances and enforce regulation under the Environment Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, whether the proposed regulatory body would function under the appellate supervision by a National Green Tribunal;

(c) if so, whether the Central Pollution Control Board and its state units would continue to function under the proposed NEPA; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) to (d) The proposal to set up a National Environment Protection Authority (NEPA) to strengthen compliance and enforcement of environmental statutes and to improve environmental planning and management is in a conceptual stage. A discussion paper on the proposed NEPA has been uploaded in the Ministry's Website and suggestions/comments are being received from various stakeholders. The proposal is in a primary stage and the configuration and scope of the proposed Authority is yet to be finalized.

Introduction of Bt. Brinjal

325. SHRI P. RAJEEVE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had made any scientific studies on introduction of Bt. Brinjalus into Indian market;

(b) if so, whether the expert committee made effective consultation with the scientists, agricultural experts, farmers organizations, consumer groups and NGOs; and

(c) whether the introduction of Bt. Brinjal would affect the local farmers and traders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) Bt brinjal event EE-1 has been developed in compliance with the prevailing regulatory procedures and biosafety guidelines which conform to the international norms. The environmental safety assessment studies have been carrried out on pollen escape out- crossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect of the gene on non-target organisms, presence of the protein in soil and its effect on soit microuflora, confirmation of the absence of Terminator Gene and baseline susceptibility studies. The food and feed safety assessment studies carried out include composition analysis, allergenicity and toxicological studies, and feeding studies on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes.

(b) In accordance with the prescribed terms of reference, the Expert Committee reviewed the findings of the data generated during large scale trials, biosafety data of Bt brinjal provided by the developer, studies conducted by various institutions, published literature, reports from international/national groups and representations from NGOs, farmers, consumers and other stakeholders.

(c) The cumulative results of more than 50 field trials conducted to assess the safety, efficacy and agronomic performance of Bt brinjal demonstrate that Cry1Ac protein in Bt brinjal provides effective protection from the Fruit and Shoot Borer, a major pest in brinjal crop; resulting in enhanced economic benefits to the farmers and traders accrued from higher marketable yield and lower usage of pesticide sprays.

National GANGA RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY

326. SHRI D. RAJA :
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN :
SHRI R. C. SINGH :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Ganga River Basin Authority has recently approved an ambitious project to prevent the discharge of untreated municipal sewage and industrial effluent into the Ganga by 2020;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Governments have also been asked to provide share of total investment;

(d) if so, the total investment required and share to be provided by the State Governments; and

(e) how Government is going to create funds for the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) to (e) The first meeting of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) held on 5th October 2009 resolved that by the year 2020, no untreated municipal sewage